The taluk was mostly unoccupied formerly, but that state of affairs had long ago changed. There was at present keen competition for lands and many people from other taluks had entered the taluk and occupied most of the hitherto unoccupied area, and, in the near future, the population would become far more dense than it ever was. Replying to the Dewan, the Member said that the creation of a Stationary Magistrate's Court at Chengannur would not improve matters, as that would afford no relief to the inconveniences of the people in the eastern *pakuthies* in having to go to Chengannur for all matters connected with revenue work. There was already a Stationary Magistrate's Court at Pathanamthitta with a pucka building and a fairly decent staff. A slight addition to the staff was alone therefore necessary to make Pathanamthitta the head-quarters of the new taluk. On financial grounds also, the proposal deserved kind consideration. The Member therefore requested that the taluk be divided into two, and the new taluk, which might comprise the Pathanamthitta, Kumbazha, Elanthur, Omallur and Rani *pakuthies*, located at Pathanamthitta.

Dewan's reply.—The Peishkar will be asked to report on the question.

12. The need for the grant of lands for the occupation of the Pulayas.

Mr. Aiyan Kali (Member, Nominated) first expressed the gratitude of the Pulaya community for the benevolent policy of the Government in ameliorating their condition and also for the many acts of good hitherto done for their benefit. He next mentioned that Mr. Saradan Solomon was not a member of the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham, which was an organisation solely of the *Hindu* Pulayas, and he requested the Government not to consider any of his (Saradan Solomon's) representations as emanating from the Sangham.

Proceeding to his subject, the Member said that it was three years since the Government promised to register 500 acres of *puthuval* lands in the Vilappil *pakuthi* of the Neyyattinkara taluk in the names of the Pulayas. But the lands were not yet registered to them. It was stated that another six months would be required to remove the tree growth on the lands. He prayed that stringent orders might be issued to effect the registry without further delay and to settle the Pulayas on the lands.

Dewan's reply.—The Peishkar will be asked to expedite the settlement of the Pulayas on the 500 acres of land already granted to them in the Vilappil *pakuthi*.

Mr. C. Saradan Solomon (Member, Nominated) also warmly thanked the Government and the Dewan personally for the very generous policy in uplifting the Pulaya community. He said that, at the last session of the Assembly, he had asked for the registry of lands in the names of the Pulayas belonging to the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham. He had also submitted some petitions pointing out specifically the lands which were available. But he regretted to state that nothing had yet been done to grant any lands to them. He therefore ventured to repeat the prayer and requested that early action might be taken to register whatever lands might be available—whether *puthuval*, *poramboke*, *kayal* or canal—in the names of the Pulayas in each taluk, if not in each *pakuthi*.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

Mr. T. Chothi (Member, Nominated) thanked His Highness the Maha Raja and the Dewan, on behalf of the Pulaya community in Central Travancore, for the many benefits conferred on the community and for having nominated him as a Member. He said that the Pulayas of Central Travancore were in a more miserable condition than those of South Travancore. They had not as much freedom of action there, as he knew they had here, and the efforts of a few, who were working for their cause, had not yet attained fruition. The Government were therefore their only support. They had at present no places for occupation. Some Pulayas had occupied lands in the *pakuthies* of Ezhumattur, Cherukole, Rani and Pandalam Vadakkekara in the Thiruvalla and Chengannur taluks. He prayed that orders might be issued to register

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

those lands to them and also to assign to the Pulayas any other lands that might be available on the sides of the paddy fields or canals.

Dewan's reply.—The Peishkar will be asked to submit proposals for settling the Pulayas on some of the waste lands in the Thiruvalla and Chengannur taluks.

(2) Forest Revenue.

13. The need for the better administration of the Forest Department by developing its resources.

Mr. C. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Quilon taluk) first referred to the system of engaging contractors for working down timber from the forests, and said that it was detrimental to the interests of the Government. He pointed out that contractors were engaged probably because the forests had not been opened up by roads, and there was difficulty in removing the timber. In his opinion, contractors should never be engaged for the purpose, but the exploitation of timber should be done departmentally. To facilitate this, it was necessary to improve the communications in the forests. In that connection, he suggested that electric tramways, aerial tramways by rope-ways, and also removable light tramways might, with advantage, be tried. The capital expenditure for such works should be considerably increased. Owing to the importance of the question, he would go to the length of suggesting that one year's expenditure on the Engineering Department might be allotted for opening up the forests, and, if that were done, the receipts of the department would steadily increase and several valuable things in the forests such as guttapercha, dye-stuffs, turpentine, tar and resin could be easily worked down, to the advantage alike of the Government and the people. Another suggestion he had to make was that saw-mills should be installed in convenient places in the forests and the timber converted into materials and removed to the plains. That would also leave a lot of firewood for the people's use.

He next suggested the desirability of introducing the keddah system of capturing elephants as in Mysore. The pit system was an antiquated one.

[Mr. Rama Rao, the Conservator of Forests, explained to the Member that the keddah system was tried here in 1052, but it was found that the mortality in the captures was much heavier than under the pit system.]

The Member, however, disagreed and said that, with a greater amount of care, the keddah system could be successfully tried. He said that it was the more necessary to introduce keddah operations here, as the elephants in the State forests were of the best kind.

The Member next dwelt upon the hardships caused to the people by the recent increase in the tariff value of teak and blackwood. When the monopoly for the purchase of teak and blackwood granted to Messrs. Wallibhoy Kadhirbhoy & Co., Bombay, was recently abolished by the Government, the people hailed the measure with delight. But simultaneously with the abolition, the tariff rates on the two species of timber were nearly doubled. The consequences to the public were more disastrous than before. No one could purchase any timber even for house-building at the present abnormal prices. The depots were overstocked but it was of no benefit to the country. He prayed that the tariff rates should therefore be reduced.

The next point dealt with was the necessity of the Government waiving their right to the teak and other Royal trees standing on private lands. The Member said that, under existing arrangements, the owners not only did not take care of the trees, but even wantonly destroyed them, as they were not to be of any benefit to them. At present one-half the value was allowed as *kudivila* to the owner. But he contended that the full right over such trees should be given to the owner, as was the case in many parts of British India.

Lastly, he pointed out, for the information of the department, that some of the Forest subordinates such as Guards were getting lands registered in their names

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly